

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 5, 2013

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We respectfully request that you provide full and fair consideration of requests for humanitarian parole authorization specifically under the Significant Public Benefit and Parole Program (SPBP) from former Cuban political prisoners and their families currently exiled in Spain, and that you work closely with Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's government to ensure that these Cuban exiles are treated humanely.


We appreciate that the Department of State, in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, provided humanitarian parole authorization travel for many former Cuban political prisoners and their families who were exiled in Spain. Due to the SPBP program, many of those exiles are reunited with their families in the United States. However, we have been informed that there remains as many as 48 former Cuban political prisoners and their families exiled in Spain and that they are no longer receiving humanitarian or other financial assistance. We also have been told that many live on the streets of Madrid in makeshift tents along with their immediate families, including their wives and young children, and have desperately reached out to our embassy in Madrid seeking assistance.

As such, it is imperative that, as Americans who deeply value democracy, free expression and belief, we work together to ensure that those who have suffered for their courage in opposing a brutal tyrannical dictatorship are not forgotten. Specifically, in furtherance of that goal, we would like additional information regarding the status of those Cuban refugees and request answers to the following questions:

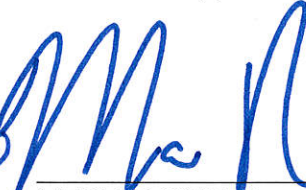
- What pending SPBP applications are still being reviewed?
- How many political prisoners from Cuba have registered at the U.S. Embassy in Madrid?
- We have been told that, beginning in approximately 2011, additional political prisoners were conditionally released and they, along with their immediate families, were also exiled to Spain at different times during that year. Did the U.S. Embassy in Madrid reach out to these additional political prisoners and their families and consider their eligibility for humanitarian parole travel to the United States?

Accordingly, within all applicable rules and regulations, we respectfully request that you do all that you can to ensure that these Cuban exiles are treated humanely while in Spain, and that they receive just and expeditious consideration of their humanitarian parole requests.

Sincerely,



ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Member of Congress



MARCO RUBIO
United States Senator



ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator



MARIO DIAZ-BALART
Member of Congress



ALBIO SIRES
Member of Congress



JOE GARCIA
Member of Congress

CC: Acting Secretary Rand Beers, Department of Homeland Security